


# BRILLIANT SUN

NUMBER 110 / 23 - 29 July 2018



**BREATHE THE AIR TO  
SMELL THE FRAGRANCE OF HIS  
PRESENCE;  
GAZE AT THE SKY TO SEE THE LIGHT  
OF HIS MAGNANIMITY;  
AND LISTEN TO THE LARKS TO HEAR  
THE SOUND OF HIS INVITATION  
AS IT IS THE BIRTH ANNIVERSARY OF  
THE EIGHTH SUN  
CONGRATULATIONS TO ALL HIS  
LOVERS.**

- THE HEART REACTING AND CONNECTING WITH ALLAH
- NEVER-ENDING BLESSINGS OF THE BRILLIANT SUN
  - A WINDOW TO WATCH THE SUN
  - WHAT'S A MOTHER TO DO?
- WHY IS THERE THE HELL WHEN ALLAH LOVES HUMANS?





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PRAY

FAITH

GOD

# THE HEART REACTING AND CONNECTING WITH ALLAH

﴿إِنَّمَا الْمُؤْمِنُونَ الَّذِينَ إِذَا ذُكِرَ اللَّهُ وَجِلَتْ قُلُوبُهُمْ﴾

﴿The faithful are only those whose hearts tremble [with awe] when Allah is mentioned.﴾ (8:2)



When moral precepts are discussed within the framework of Qur'anic and Islamic teachings, the heart holds a pivotal role. The heart (*al-qalb*) is a vessel that reflects the qualities of the soul and one's conduct, which is why we are told to keep it pure and clean.

A righteous heart is a heart that invokes upon Almighty Allah to grant it peace and tranquillity, and this is done by constant connection and remembrance (*dhikr*). The result of remembrance is knowing the magnitude of Allah and with this realisation, one's heart trembles with awe. Connecting with Allah is building that attachment we need to strengthen our faith.

All of these have an impact on our moral conduct--having faith, remembering Allah, purity of the heart, feeling a sense of awe and reverence. When you ponder on all this and create that spiritual atmosphere within yourself, it shows itself in your behaviour. Your inner tranquillity plays itself out in the real world.

When you are seized with awe at the thought of Allah, you return to Him. It is not a negative fear or apprehensiveness. It is more of a joyous wonder. Shivering and trembling because you want to align yourself with the Almighty, not only in verbal remembrance, but also in transforming your behaviour to suit Him.

The heart reacts when remembering Allah, and

this verse refers to such an innate state as trembling (*wajila*).

This is one of the many benefits of preserving your heart and keeping it in constant *dhikr*. There are so many things a believer passes through in his or her thoughts when they remember Allah. It could be reflecting on the sins they might have committed. It could be the eagerness to self-improve and gain enlightenment. It could be just trying to comprehend the greatness and magnificence of Allah.

It's similar to standing in the presence of a great person. What would go through your mind? How would you feel? Your heart rate would increase, you would not be able to speak so fluently, and that would only be the beginning.

We are given assurance as believers that when we make that connection to Allah through *dhikr* and our hearts feel that reverence, it will accelerate and increase our faith, as the verse continues to say.

The greatest outcome of such a reaction is that it will reflect on our behaviour and uplift our moral conduct. Ultimately, this is what we expect to have as a result of faith (*īmān*) and *dhikr*.

\* By: Dr. Sh. Zaid Al-Salami





# NEVER-ENDING BLESSINGS OF THE BRILLIANT SUN

Imam Riḍā's (P.B.U.H.) journey from Medina to Mashhad<sup>1</sup> is commonly known for its most obvious feature: It was a forced migration scheme devised by Ma'mūn to separate Imam (P.B.U.H.) from his family and friends. From the start of Imam Riḍā's (P.B.U.H.) tumultuous journey, a never-ending trail of blessings has been revealed till this very day.

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1. It was known as Merv.

Imam Riḍā's (P.B.U.H.) journey began in 200 A.H. along with some of his most loyal, lifelong companions. Upon entering Iran, he was welcomed with warm greetings. From this moment, his mission to keep alive the knowledge of Qur'an, *ḥadīth*, and *sharī'a*, on the path of the *Ahl al-Bayt* (P.B.U.T.), continued. An eternal blessing of Imam Riḍā's (P.B.U.H.) Divine soul was that he spread Islamic thought and influenced through preaching the true and holy Islamic traditions, which have been manifested throughout history.

It is narrated that one of the camel drivers of Imam Riḍā's (P.B.U.H.) caravan revealed, "While with his holiness (P.B.U.H.), we arrived at our village (in Isfahan), I asked the Imam (P.B.U.H.) to write down a *ḥadīth* in his own handwriting for me. His holiness (P.B.U.H.) bestowed the following *ḥadīth* as a gift, "Be a loving friend of the household of Muḥammad (P.B.U.H. & H.H.), although you are impious; and be a loving friend of their loving friends, although they are impious."<sup>1</sup>

In reality, Ma'mūn's plans failed as love for Imam Riḍā (P.B.U.H.) increased, miracles also increased, and a love for Islam grew within those who came into contact with the great Imam (P.B.U.H.). To make this point clear, at one time, as Imam (P.B.U.H.) was departing from Neyshābūr, a group of *ḥadīth* scholars grabbed hold of the bridle of the Imam's (P.B.U.H.) camel and declared, "We are sworn unto you and your purified forefathers, narrate a *ḥadīth* from your father to us."

After such requests were made and thousands of hands were eager to write, Imam Riḍā (P.B.U.H.) announced, "...I heard the Prophet (P.B.U.H. & H.H.) say (on behalf of Allah), 'The phrase "*Lā ilāha illā Allāh*" is My fortress, whoever sincerely affirms it, may enter My fortress, and whoever enters My fortress shall be secure from My punishment"'. When they moved on, the Imam (P.B.U.H.) said out loudly, "There are certain conditions to this and I

am one of those conditions."<sup>2</sup> Indeed, Imam Riḍā (P.B.U.H.) addressed the needs of the people; he gave the people honest answers and closure to questions they longed to have answered. This was a great act that could sustain limitless blessings.

He solved problems that no other individual could solve at a time when he faced the harshest restrictions under Ma'mūn's iron fist. Beyond the spread of his *ḥadīth* and traditions during his migration came many celebrated miracles. For example, when Imam Riḍā (P.B.U.H.) entered a house in Neyshābūr, he planted an almond seed which became a tree and fruited within a year. The people learned of this, and whoever became ill would eat from the almond tree and get cured; those who had sore eyes, women who had difficulty giving birth, or animals with certain ailments were all cured by a single almond or a twig from the tree."<sup>3</sup>

Today, Imam Riḍā's (P.B.U.H.) valuable lessons remain with the Shī'a, written in their historical manuscripts, and practiced up to this day. Powerful miracles from the Divine, makes one realize that Allah the Almighty watched over this holy Imam (P.B.U.H.) on that forced migration; and, an everlasting defeat was dealt upon Ma'mūn; which echoes every second of each day, as people, by the thousands, make a remarkable journey to pay homage to Imam Riḍā (P.B.U.H.) in Mashhad, obtaining the benefits of his everlasting blessings.<sup>4</sup>

\*By: Anahita Hamzei

1. Majlisī, M., *Biḥār al-Anwār*, Beirut: Dār Iḥyā al-Turāth al-'Arabī, vol. 27, p. 51.

2. Ṣadūq, M., *'Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā* (P.B.U.H.), Tehran: Ṣadūq Publication, vol. 2, p. 135.

3. Ibid., vol. 2, p. 132.

4. Taken from: Shabbar, S.M.R., *Story of the Holy Ka'aba And its People*, Muhammadi Trust of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, pp. 86-96;

Najafi Yazdi, M., Ahmad Rezwani trans., *The story of the Sun: A Look at Imam al-Reza's Life*, Mashhad: Islamic Research Foundation of Āstān Quds Raḍawī;

Qurashi, B., Jasim al-Rasheed trans., *The life of Imam 'Ali Bin Musa al-Ridha*, Qom: Ansariyan Publication, pp. 602-604;

<https://www.majzooban.org>;  
<https://www.imamreza.net>.



IN STEP WITH THE SUN

# A WINDOW TO WATCH THE SUN

It has happened repeatedly for every believer to feel totally lonesome or profoundly overjoyed, to feel the need for the presence of a celestial being with whom we can share our grief and joy. We seek someone whose remembrance is always the means of tranquility and whose presence is the everlasting source of guidance. Who can provide us with warmer embrace than the Eighth Sun? Which window is safer to cling to than that of ‘Alī b. Mūsā al-Riḍā (P.B.U.H.)? The holy Burial Chamber [*Ḍarīḥ*] can offer us the opportunity to observe such brilliance, to resort to our Eighth Imam (P.B.U.H.) to wholeheartedly share our feelings, and to plead for guidance. It is a place where all the lovers of Imam Riḍā (P.B.U.H.) find their eyes flowing with tears of faith and happiness, a place where they can smell the fragrance of his presence. They seek to caress the Chamber and hold it tightly with the dream of holding his holy hands. They whisper their requests while they believe in his mercy. They tether their heart to the Chamber to make their love and faith permanent.



As this part of paradise deserves greater familiarity, we aim to elaborate more on the holy Burial Chamber. Luminous with spirituality, the holy Burial Chamber is an exquisitely crafted window that surrounds the holy gravestone. From the Safavid era onwards, five Burial Chambers have been installed over the gravestone, the detailed characteristics of which are provided in the following.<sup>1</sup>

Name of the Burial Chamber	Historical Period	Time of Installation	Materials	Characteristics	Place of Preservation
The 1 <sup>st</sup> : Wooden Burial Chamber	Safavid period	1541 C.E.	Made of wood embellished with precious gems	It was built by the order of Shāh Ṭahmāsb. One of the glorious chapters of the holy Qur'an named "Al-Insān" was inscribed in <i>Thuluth</i> script on every side of this Burial Chamber.	Totally destroyed
The 2 <sup>nd</sup> : <i>Nigīn Nishān</i> Burial Chamber	Afsharid period	1744 C.E.	Made of steel, studded with gems and encrusted with ruby and emerald stones	It was built by the order of Shāhrukh Mīrzā, the grandson of Nādir Shāh. Coinciding with the installation of the 5 <sup>th</sup> Chamber, this one was transferred to the lower level of the grave.	Holy <i>Sardāb</i> [lower level of the holy grave]
The 3 <sup>rd</sup> : Steel Burial Chamber	Qajar period	1822 C.E.	Made of plain steel, decorated with gold and gems	It was built by the order of Faṭḥ 'Alī Shāh. It is 3 meters in width, 4 meters in length and 2 meters in height. Two glorious chapters of the holy Qur'an named "Al-Insān" and "Yāsīn" were inscribed in <i>Thuluth</i> script on every side of this Burial Chamber.	Museum of the holy Shrine




Name of the Burial Chamber	Historical Period	Time of Installation	Materials	Characteristics	Place of Preservation
The 4 <sup>th</sup> : <i>Milk and sugar</i> Burial Chamber	Pahlavi period	1959 C.E.	Made of gold and silver	It is 3.6 meters wide, 4 meters long, 3.9 meters high, and weighs 7 tons. It contains 14 orifices, each one mentioning one of the 14 Infallibles (P.B.U.T.). Two glorious chapters of the holy Qur'an named "Al-Insān" and "Yāsīn" are inscribed in <i>Thuluth</i> script on a gold frame on the edge. The names of Allah as well as some traditions praising the virtues of Imam Riḍā (P.B.U.T.) are inscribed on every side.	Museum of the holy Shrine
The 5 <sup>th</sup> : <i>Sunlight</i> Burial Chamber	After the Islamic Revolution	2001 C.E.	Made of gold and silver	Designed by Mahmoud Farshchian, it is 3.73 meters wide, 4.78 meters long, 3.96 meters high, and weighs 12 tons. This chamber holds 14 orifices, each one inscribed with the name of one of the 14 Infallibles (P.B.U.T.). Sun flowers on the chamber symbolically refer to the Imam's (P.B.U.T.) attribute as " <i>Shams al-Shumūs</i> " (the sun of suns). Eight-leaf flowers symbolize his being the eighth Imam, and five leaf ones symbolize "The Five Pure Ones". Two glorious chapters of the holy Qur'an named "Al-Insān" and "Yāsīn" are inscribed in <i>Thuluth</i> script on a gold frame on the edge.	The current Burial place

\* By: Mahsa Raeisi Sattari

1. Taken from: *A Guide to the Raḍawī Holy Shrine*, Mashhad: Āstān Quds Raḍawī Publication, p. 83.





## WHAT'S A MOTHER TO DO?

**Question:** We are a Muslim family living in Europe. My son will soon be a teenager and based on what I've seen in other families, I'm a bit concerned. Usually teenagers here seek out a job, play sports, and in general gather with other young people of their own age. Sometimes it's hard for Muslim teenagers here to find a job, based on fear or discrimination on the part of their employers. Likewise, fitting in with a group for sports or other activities can be challenging. On the other hand, there are many so-called Muslim youth groups which actually seem to be a recruitment ploy of various extremist groups, ready to snap up these youths. What's a mother to do?

**Answer:** Dear reader, you are not alone. Many other Muslim mothers in Europe specially voice the same concern. As you have no doubt learned from experience, peer groups are very important to children, beginning in the school years and increasingly so during adolescence. Teenagers feel an inner push to find an identity, and joining a group with which they can identify often helps relieve this pressure. This is why we see them changing their hair styles, ways of dressing and talking, and even spouting ideologies that seem to reflect a particular movement or group. According to Imam 'Alī (P.B.U.H.), "The heart of a youth is like empty ground; whatever seeds are thrown into it



are accepted.”<sup>1</sup> So, yes, our youth are susceptible to various ideas and movements.

What’s the solution? First, good for you for being concerned in advance. Here are some tips:

1. Now is the time to be sure that your son is firmly attached to Islam. In pleasant and appealing ways, be sure that he understands and loves the true Islam. Help him to form attachments to the fourteen infallibles (P.B.U.T.), to know their lives and work. In other words, as his heart is a ground to be planted, plow that land now.

2. Seek out other Muslim families in your community and form youth groups. The groups should uphold Islamic values, and at the same time be interesting and engaging.

3. Make yourself available for concerns and questions as your child grows. Answer his religious questions, as well as his lifestyle questions, before anyone else does.

4. To the extent possible, be close with your extended family, such as uncles, cousins, and in-laws, or even leaders in the Muslim community who can reinforce your message to your son, and whom your son might feel comfortable speaking with about his concerns.

5. Finally and foremost, as all mothers must, ask Allah’s help in guiding and protecting our children. Know that He is Kinder and more Powerful than any parent can be, so seek help at the source! May Allah grant you and your family success in this life and the next!

\* Do you have a question you would like to be answered? We will not be able to answer every question but will choose the most commonly asked ones for a response.

\* By: Dr. Z. D’Elia

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1. ‘Āmilī, H., *Wasā’il al-Shī’a*, Qom: Al al-Bayt (P.B.U.T.) Publication, vol. 21, p. 478.





# WHY IS THERE THE HELL WHEN ALLAH LOVES HUMANS?

There are several questions about the philosophy, reality, quantity, quality and length of Allah's punishment in the Hell. In what follows, we discuss some of these questions in more details.

## Why Punishment?

As a matter of fact, torture in the Hell is the reaction of the human being's actions. In other words, the fire is not God-made, but it is a man-made phenomenon. Just like a student who has not listen to his teacher's recommendations in the school year and finally gets into trouble at the end of the year. In this case, the teacher is not guilty, but the student. Thereupon, the penalties are the natural effect of an action in this world, or the result of the presence of an action on the Day of Resurrection as the holy Qur'an reads, "The evils of what they had earned will appear to them, and they will be besieged by what they used to deride." (39:48) In this respect, the Apostle of Allah (P.B.U.H. & H.H.) said, "Paradise is like a desert, and the two *dhikrs*, "*Subhānallāh*" (Glory be to Allah) and "*Alḥamdulillāh*" (Praise be to Allah) are its trees."<sup>1</sup>

1. Majlisī, M., *Biḥār al-Anwār*, Beirut: Dār Iḥyā' al-Turāth al-'Arabī, vol. 7, p. 229.



This narration reveals that our actions and words will appear in bodily forms in the Resurrection as it was discussed in No. 108, under the issue of the embodiment of actions in the afterlife.

### Why Severe Punishment?

It has been seen that some people get into trouble in an accident or a horrible event, so that, their hands, legs and spine become broken and they will not be able to move. Likewise, sometimes, some people get involved with dangerous and deadly addictions or diseases like AIDS for an imaginary pleasure, while they could have avoided these hard conditions. Can we say why the results of the accident, addictions and diseases are much more severe and painful than their causes, and why there is not a logical connection between them?! Not at all! Because, they are the immediate consequences of their actions; everyone has been warned about these consequences. That same meaning also applies to human torments, i.e. the punishments are in accordance with the action that we have done in the world. If we read the tortures of oppressors in history, we can believe that some people really deserve severe punishment in the Hell Fire.

It can also be said that punishment in the Hell Fire is like a great surgery for a human soul which has been damaged by mortal sins. In fact, as illnesses and cures have different species, sins and their cures are also different. Some diseases will get better with taking a pill or a rest, while some others might need a surgery. In this case, some sins are removed by worldly hardships, but some others need a great operation. For instance, when the Children of Israel worshiped the Calf in the absence of Moses, Allah the Almighty ordered them to kill each other (*the holy Qur'an*, 2:54; *the*

*Bible*, Exodus, 32:27-28), because, they preferred polytheism to monotheism and drowned in the Calf's love, as the holy Qur'an reads, "And their hearts had been imbued with [the love of] the Calf." (2:93) Therefore, major sins need major cures, which, in some cases, is the Hell Fire.

### Why Eternal Punishment?

Some people are so immersed in sin that their nature is joined with sin. That is, they enjoy committing the sin, so that, if they survive for a thousand years, they will continue to commit a sin. In fact, if the essence of monotheism disappears, blasphemy and evil grow in the human soul. The immortality in the Hell is the result of the destruction of the light of nature. Once a Jew asked Allah's Messenger (P.B.U.H. & H.H.), "Why are the sinners to be tormented forever?" and he replied, "Because of their intentions. Since, they intended to commit a sin if they were alive forever, as the people of Paradise, due to their good intentions, will be in Paradise forever, since, they intended to do good if they were alive forever."<sup>1</sup> Therefore, it is Allah the Almighty, who loves His people, but they wrong themselves as the holy Qur'an reads, "Indeed Allah does not wrong people in the least; rather it is people who wrong themselves." (10:44)

By: Mohammad Javad Norouzi

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1. Şadūq, M., *Al-Tawhīd*, Qom: Jāmi'a Mudarrisīn Publication, p. 398.

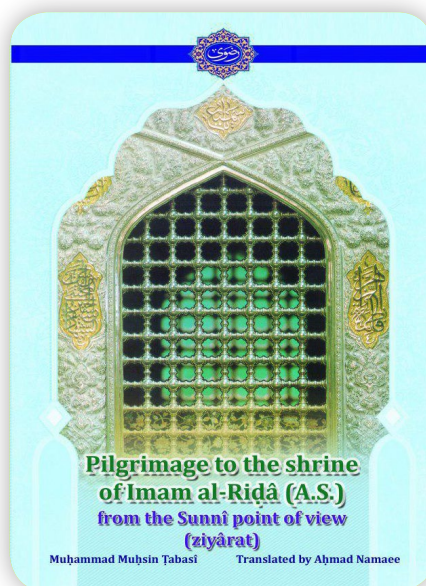


# PILGRIMAGE TO THE SHRINE OF IMAM AL-RIDĀ FROM THE SUNNĪ POINT OF VIEW

The book *Pilgrimage to the Shrine of Imam al-Ridā From the Sunnī Point of View* written by Muhammad Muhsin Tabasi is a short but complete collection which explains the historical reports of the Sunnī scholars and their followers on pilgrimage, supplication and imploring, in Imam Ridā's (P.B.U.H.) shrine according to authorized Sunnī sources. It contains three chapters:

1. The Virtue of Pilgrimage,
2. The Pilgrimage of the Sunnī Scholars to Mashhad al-Ridā (P.B.U.H.), and
3. The Shrine of Imam Ridā (P.B.U.H.). It refutes the misconceptions of the Wahhabi group concerning the illegality of pilgrimage and supplication and the excommunication of the pilgrims and sentencing them to death.<sup>1</sup>

1. Tabasi, M., *Pilgrimage to the Shrine of Imam al-Ridā From the Sunnī Point of View*, Mashhad: Islamic Research Foundation of Āstān Quds Raḍawī, pp. 5-7.



## HEARTWRITING

# IN THIS PIECE OF PARADISE

His domain is clearly an empire of love which is the purest emotion you feel when you step on the green marble, overcome by the brilliant lights reflected in the precious stones, gold, and intricate glass designs while being simultaneously subdued influenced by the fragrant dance of rosewater and frankincense. Then there are the tears of deliverance irrigating worry-worn faces, the smiles, the handshakes, the hugs and kisses, all of which leave me drowning in a sea of love. I was overwhelmed by a sense of peace, and realized that I live in a world trapped by the tensions of war.

Imam Ridā (P.B.U.H.) is not dead, he is very much alive. Every year, over 14 million pilgrims come to visit this piece of paradise. This mausoleum is so huge that I spent one whole day walking through it, meeting with people and praying, and when I checked my step-counter, I was astonished to find that I'd walked 16km.

Imam Ridā (P.B.U.H.) taught me that love conquers, not hate, and that war is a shortsighted person's means of achieving hollow victory.

I learned of his holiness (P.B.U.H.) as a young Muslim and went on my first pilgrimage to Iran to pray for my mother who had been diagnosed with stage 4 lymphoma and given merely a few months to live. That journey changed my life and miraculously, my mother beat the cancer and lived another 6 years. This year, I returned to my Imam (P.B.U.H.) to pray for peace. I pray that we all find it before it's too late.

\*By: Kalyan Ali Balaven





PEACE BE UPON YOU

## O' SUN OF SUNS

اللَّهُمَّ صَلِّ عَلَى عَلِيٍّ بْنِ مُوسَى الرِّضَا الْمُرْتَضَى،

O' Allah! (Please) Send blessings upon 'Alī the son of Mūsā, the cordial, the well-pleased,

الْإِمَامِ النَّقِيِّ،

the pious and the bright Imam,

وَحُجَّتِكَ عَلَى مَنْ فَوْقَ الْأَرْضِ وَمَنْ تَحْتَ الثَّرَى،

Your argument against whoever is above the earth and whoever is beneath the dust,

الصَّادِقِ الشَّهِيدِ،

the ever-truthful martyr,

صَلَاةً كَثِيرَةً تَامَةً زَاكِیَّةً،

with such blessings that are very much perfect, purified,

مُتَوَاصِلَةً مُتَوَاتِرَةً مُتَرَادِفَةً

continuous, uninterrupted, and consecutive,

كَأَفْضَلِ مَا صَلَّيْتَ عَلَى أَحَدٍ مِنْ أَوْلِيَائِكَ.<sup>1</sup>

and with the best form of blessings that You have ever bestowed upon any of Your intimate servants.

1. Ibn Qūlawayh, J., *Kāmil al-Ziyārāt*, Najaf: Dār al-Murtaḍawīyya: Special salutations upon Imam Riḍā (P.B.U.H.), p. 309.